Veterans Affairs Canada | Anciens Combattants Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada

2014–15

Departmental Performance Report

The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs and
Associate Minister of National Defence

Canada

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Minister's Message

I am honoured to serve Canadians as Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence. Canadians sent a clear message in October that they want real change, and they expect us to fulfill our commitments—including our ambitious commitments to Veterans. I am ready and eager to do my part in delivering on those promises to Canadians.

While this report looks back on 2014–15 and accounts for progress made on a number of fronts, I am looking forward. My pledge to Veterans is to deliver real results and to rebuild strong, respectful relationships with our Veteran community.

Our public reports, such as this performance report, will become one of a number of ways I demonstrate a strong focus on results, share progress on commitments, assess the effectiveness of our work, and align our resources with priorities, in order to achieve the results Canadians want and deserve.

I will approach my role of Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence in a way that reflects the values we all embrace: inclusion, honesty, hard work, fiscal prudence, and generosity of spirit. Veterans and their families have earned our respect and gratitude, and they should not have to fight their own government for support and compensation.

As Minister, I will work to ensure that our government lives up to our obligation to Veterans and their families. I will work to ensure that Veterans receive the care, compassion, respect, and economic opportunities they deserve. I will work to ensure that we honour the service of our Veterans and provide new career opportunities, make it easier for Veterans to access services—including mental health services—and do more to support the families of Canada's Veterans. As Minister, I will establish and maintain a strong relationship with the Minister of National Defence towards a seamless transition for Canadian Armed Forces members to the programs and services of Veterans Affairs Canada.

I am deeply grateful to have this opportunity to serve Canada's Veterans as we build an even greater country. Together, we will work tirelessly to honour the trust Canadians—and Veterans—have given us.

The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs and
Associate Minister of National Defence

Section I: Organizational Expenditure Overview

Organizational Profile

Minister:
- The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.
- The Honourable Erin O'Toole, P.C., C.D., M.P. (responsible Minister for 2014–15)

Institutional Head: General (retired) Walter Natynczyk, C.M.M., M.S.C., C.D., Deputy Minister

Ministerial Portfolio: Veterans Affairs

Enabling Instrument(s):
- *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*[i]
- *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act*[ii] (The New Veterans Charter)
- *Pension Act*[iii]

Year of Incorporation / Commencement: 1923

Organizational Context

Raison d'être

Canada's development as an independent country with a unique identity stems partly from its proud military achievements. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) exists to help those whose courageous efforts gave us this legacy and contributed to Canada's growth as a nation.

Veterans Affairs Canada's mandate is set out in the *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*. It charges the Minister of Veterans Affairs with responsibility for "the care, treatment, or re-establishment in civil life of any person who served in the Canadian Forces or Merchant Navy or in the naval, army, air forces or merchant navies of Her Majesty, of any person who has otherwise engaged in pursuits relating to war, and of any other person designated . . . and the care of the dependants or survivors of any person referred to." Veterans Affairs Canada is also responsible for keeping alive the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace.

Responsibilities[1]

Veterans Affairs Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada fulfills its mandate by enabling the well-being of Veterans and their families, and by supporting recognition and remembrance of the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace.

[1] The wording of the Departmental Responsibilities has been updated from what is found in the *2014–15 Report on Plans and Priorities* to better reflect the current work of the Department.

This is accomplished by:

- providing leadership as a champion of Veterans, and by promoting the strategic alignment and coordination of benefits and services; whether available through the Department and other federal partners, or through provincial and community programs and non-government organizations.

- the work and research of the Department—listening to the suggestions of Veterans, their representatives, and stakeholders. The Department strives to design and deliver programs that meet the modern needs of Veterans and their families.

- helping Veterans access the supports and services they need, from all levels of government and the community. Veterans Affairs Canada aims to be a leader in the care and support for all Veterans and their families.

Veterans Ombudsman

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman helps both former and current members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), as well as their family members and other clients of Veterans Affairs Canada address concerns related to VAC and the Veterans Bill of Rights.[iv] As an impartial and independent officer, the Veterans Ombudsman reports directly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and works to ensure that Veterans, their representatives and their families are treated fairly.

Strategic Outcomes and Program Alignment Architecture

1 **Strategic Outcome: Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans**
- 1.1 **Program:** Disability and Death Compensation
  - 1.1.1 **Sub-Program:** Disability Pension Program
    - 1.1.1.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Disability Pensions
    - 1.1.1.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Exceptional Incapacity Allowance
    - 1.1.1.3 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Treatment Allowance
    - 1.1.1.4 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Other Allowances
  - 1.1.2 **Sub-Program:** Disability Awards Program
    - 1.1.2.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Disability Awards
    - 1.1.2.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Educational Assistance
- 1.2 **Program:** Financial Support Program
  - 1.2.1 **Sub-Program:** Financial Benefits
    - 1.2.1.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Earnings Loss
    - 1.2.1.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Canadian Forces Income Support
    - 1.2.1.3 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Supplementary Retirement Benefit
    - 1.2.1.4 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Permanent Impairment Allowance
  - 1.2.2 **Sub-Program:** War Veterans Allowance
- 1.3 **Program:** Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services
  - 1.3.1 **Sub-Program:** Rehabilitation
  - 1.3.2 **Sub-Program:** Career Transition Services
  - 1.3.3 **Sub-Program:** Health Care Benefits
    - 1.3.3.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Health Care Benefits and Services
    - 1.3.3.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Health Benefits Program - PSHCP
  - 1.3.4 **Sub-Program:** Veterans Independence Program
    - 1.3.4.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** VIP - Home Care Benefits and Services
    - 1.3.4.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** VIP - Other Services
  - 1.3.5 **Sub-Program:** Intermediate and Long Term Care
    - 1.3.5.1 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Non-departmental institutions - VIP
    - 1.3.5.2 **Sub-Sub-Program:** Non-departmental institutions - Long Term Care
  - 1.3.6 **Sub-Program:** Ste. Anne's Hospital

2 **Strategic Outcome: Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace**
- 2.1 **Program:** Canada Remembers Program
  - 2.1.1 **Sub-Program:** Public Education and Awareness
  - 2.1.2 **Sub-Program:** Ceremonies and Events
  - 2.1.3 **Sub-Program:** Partnerships and Collaborations
  - 2.1.4 **Sub-Program:** Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance
  - 2.1.5 **Sub-Program:** Funeral and Burial Program

3 **Strategic Outcome: Veterans' rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio**[2]
- 3.1 **Program:** Veterans Ombudsman

VAC Internal Services

[2] Portfolio includes Veterans Affairs Canada and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB). The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman (OVO) provides information and referrals, and addresses complaints, emerging and systemic issues related to programs and services provided or administered by VAC. The OVO also addresses systemic issues related to the VRAB.

Organizational Priorities

Veterans Affairs Canada

Priority	Type[3]	Strategic Outcome and Programs
Improve service for Veterans and their families	Ongoing	**Strategic Outcome 1** Programs ▪ 1.1 Disability and Death Compensation ▪ 1.2 Financial Support Program ▪ 1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

Summary of Progress

- In October 2014, the Government of Canada tabled its response to the report of the House Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs (ACVA) entitled *The New Veterans Charter: Moving Forward*. The Government agreed with the spirit and intent of the majority of recommendations and committed to address most recommendations in a phased approach. In the first phase, the Government agreed to:
  - enhance transition services;
  - make legislative changes to clearly communicate how Canada will support Veterans;
  - provide more short-term psychological counselling services, including for Veterans' families;
  - combine monthly VAC benefits into one reliable monthly payment; and
  - develop an online training module to support caregivers of Veterans with operational stress injuries.
- In November 2014, the Department received approval to make considerable investments in mental health services by introducing new and expanded mental health initiatives for Veterans, serving military members, and their families including enhancements of a new operational stress injury clinic, expanded satellite operational stress injury clinic services, and other supports.
- Veterans can now access personalized information about VAC benefits and services, apply for benefits, obtain the status of their application, communicate securely with VAC, and manage their account profile online. The Department improved services and supports available to Veterans online through *My VAC Account*.
- The Department improved support for Veterans through dedication to service excellence for those who have sacrificed so much for our nation.

[3] Type is defined as follows: previously committed to—committed to in the first or second fiscal year prior to the subject year of the report; ongoing—committed to at least three fiscal years prior to the subject year of the report; and new—newly committed to in the reporting year of the *Report on Plans and Priorities* or the *Departmental Performance Report*.

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome and Program
Honour those who served Canada	Previously committed to	**Strategic Outcome 2** Program ▪ 2.1 Canada Remembers Program

Summary of Progress

- The year 2014 was an important crossroad marking the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, the 75th anniversary of Canada's entry into the Second World War, and the end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan. Veterans Affairs Canada seized this opportunity to pay homage to our long and proud tradition of service in defence of peace and freedom. Ceremonies were organized in Canada and overseas and Veterans' Week materials and learning resources were created to raise awareness and engage Canadians, notably youth, in remembrance.
- On November 11, 2014, the National War Memorial was rededicated to all who served in the past, all who serve now, and all who will serve in the future. To ensure that the memorial lists the dates of Canada's five most costly military engagements in terms of lives lost, the dates of the Afghanistan mission and the South African War were added to the National War Memorial, along with the previously inscribed dates of the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War.
- VAC provided funding for a wide range of commemorative projects which provided opportunities for Canadians to participate in remembrance across Canada. Funding was provided for the restoration of cenotaphs/monuments, as well as community engagement activities such as commemorative ceremonies.
- The Department completed plans for the construction of a permanent Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in Vimy, France, and a National Memorial to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan in Ottawa, both scheduled to be completed in 2017.

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome, Program and Sub-program
Transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital	Ongoing	**Strategic Outcome 1** Program ▪ 1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services Sub Program ○ 1.3.6 Ste. Anne's Hospital

Summary of Progress

- VAC concluded negotiations and finalized the transfer agreement with the Province of Quebec to transfer Ste. Anne's Hospital to the province. The transfer agreement was signed by all parties on April 16, 2015.
- Throughout negotiations, the Department ensured continued provision of high quality care and services to Veterans in the official language of their choice and protected the best interests of Ste. Anne's Hospital employees.

Priority	Type	Program
Modernize the Department	Previously committed to	Program ▪ 4.1 Internal Services

Summary of Progress

The Department modernized operations through a number of initiatives, most notably:

- Increasing technological capacity to deliver benefits and services:
  - Enhanced *My VAC Account* online application to allow Veterans to access personalized information about VAC benefits and services, apply online, track the status of applications, communicate directly with various VAC staff (including case managers) through secure messaging, and manage their account profile.
- Upgrading internal services and systems:
  - Implemented a Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI), providing staff and partner agencies access to a standard desktop, regardless of location. VDI has increased mobility of case managers to serve Veterans, enhanced online security, reduced time required to expand operations to new locations, and eliminated the need to support aging server hardware in each location.
  - Implemented an Enterprise Document and Records Management system (GCDOCS), in partnership with Shared Services Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada, to create, collect, and preserve information and records. Once fully implemented, this will enable employees to easily share, organize, evaluate, identify and dispose of information, while providing secure access control.
- Standardizing back office services and systems:
  - Collaborated with Shared Services Canada on the Email Transformation Initiative and Data Center Consolidation.
  - Completed technical preparation to support the Government of Canada Pay Modernization project.
  - Contributed to *My GCHR 9.1* through which Canadians will receive better value in the delivery of Human Resources (HR) services for the Public Service of Canada by consolidating over 40 HR applications to a central standard system.

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman (OVO)

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome and Program
Advance the Fair Treatment of the Veteran Community	Ongoing	**Strategic Outcome 3** Program ▪ Veterans Ombudsman

Summary of Progress

- The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman continued to provide direct assistance through early intervention activities to ensure complaints, information requests and referrals were resolved in a timely manner.
  - Had 5,510 client contacts resulting in 1,628 new cases, of which 1,388 case files were addressed and closed.
  - Initiated and reviewed three departmental programs providing services/benefits, and published the following:
    - *Veterans' Right to Fair Adjudication: The Follow-Up Report*;
    - *Supporting Severely Impaired Veterans: A Report on the New Veterans Charter Permanent Impairment Allowance and Permanent Impairment Allowance Supplement*; and
    - *Veterans' Long-Term Care Needs: A Review of Assisted Living Options for Veterans*.
  - Initiated a review of 14 emerging issues related to the New Veterans Charter, health care benefits, and disability benefits.
- Engaged Veterans and other stakeholders via public outreach:
  - Appeared before six Parliamentary Committees and the Senate Liberal Open Caucus;
  - Held a Veterans Ombudsman Advisory Council meeting;
  - Provided 72 media interviews and had 686 media mentions;
  - Met with Veterans, CAF Members, RCMP, Members of Parliament and other interested parties, at town halls in various cities across the country;
  - Attended the Vimy Commemorative Ceremony, the 70th Anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy – Juno Beach Commemoration, the 70th Anniversary of the Italian Campaign, and the 75th Anniversary of the beginning of Canada's participation in the Second World War;
  - Attended numerous Remembrance Day celebrations and spoke at several events and forums;
  - Published more than 60 articles (including blogs, news releases, op-eds and media advisories guest articles); and
  - Engaged Canadians via social media avenues, such as the OVO website (more than 49,000 hits), Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.
- Continued to respond independently to requests through the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

Risk Analysis

Key Risks

Integrated risk management is a key component of modern management. It ensures that risks are understood, managed, communicated and integrated into informed decision making and priority setting. Effective risk management enables decision makers to address challenges and uncertainties pro-actively. The Department's risks are increasingly well managed and are focussed on the most pressing issues of concern to Veterans. The risks captured in this report have been refreshed since the *2014–15 Report on Plans and Priorities* was published.

The table below outlines the Department's response to the top three external risks and the steps taken to mitigate them.

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture
1. The Department's efforts may not keep pace with Veterans' expectations of streamlined access to benefits and services.	Veterans Affairs Canada will: • continue to streamline the decision process for large programs such as disability pensions and disability awards; • implement national training initiatives to further enhance services for Veterans; and • collaborate with the Department of National Defence and other partners to ensure the seamless delivery of benefits and services.	Strategic Outcome 1
2. Veterans may not have enough information on programs and services to access the supports they need.	Veterans Affairs Canada will: • increase the visibility and profile of online information on the Department's programs and services; • expand its review of departmental letters, and other correspondence, to ensure they are clear and easy to understand; and • ensure employees have easy access to clear, up-to-date tools and information that will enable them to provide excellent service to Veterans.	Strategic Outcome 1

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture
3. The transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital (SAH) to the Province of Quebec may not occur by the anticipated transfer date of April 1, 2016.	Veterans Affairs Canada will continue to: • work diligently with the Government of Quebec toward a successful transfer of the Hospital, while maintaining excellence in care for Veterans; and • ensure employees are kept informed of developments, and supported as they prepare for the transfer.	Strategic Outcome 1 Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.6

Actual Expenditures

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

	2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	Difference (actual minus planned)
Veterans Affairs Canada	3,571,188,757	3,571,188,757	3,600,128,506	3,372,301,470	(198,887,287)
Office of the Veterans Ombudsman	5,790,009	5,790,009	5,312,011	4,578,484	(1,211,525)
Total	3,576,978,766	3,576,978,766	3,605,440,517	3,376,879,954	(200,098,812)

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents [FTEs])

	2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
Veterans Affairs Canada	2,796.0	2,873.1	77.1
Office of the Veterans Ombudsman	38.0	33.4	(4.6)
Total	2,834.0	2,906.5	72.5

Budgetary Performance Summary

Veterans Affairs Canada builds its annual budget so the Department can fully respond to eligible Veterans in need of benefits and services. A key part of this process is forecasting, which helps ensure there is enough funding for all eligible Veterans who are likely to need help in a given year.

Naturally, the Department's budget fluctuates each year due to the demand-driven nature of its programs, which are based on Veterans' needs and entitlements. In other words, a Veteran who is entitled to a benefit is paid that benefit, whether 10 Veterans come forward or 10,000. While forecasting helps ensure enough funding is available, expenditures are only incurred for Veterans who in fact come forward to use the program or service. The Government's budget process is designed to account for these fluctuations as a normal part of providing programs and services for Canadian Veterans which is why there will be changes to both forecasted and actual spending from one year to the next.

As noted above, the Department spent $3.377 billion in 2014–15, of which, 90% represented payments to Veterans, their families, and other program recipients. The difference between planned spending and actual spending mostly relates to program uptake, which was less than the forecast for 2014–15. This is a normal fluctuation, given that forecasting is typically done many months in advance of the reporting period.

Budgetary Performance Summary for Strategic Outcomes and Programs (dollars)

Strategic Outcomes, Programs and Internal Services	2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2013–14 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2012–13 Actual Spending (authorities used)
Strategic Outcome 1: Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans								
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	2,131,096,720	2,131,096,720	2,075,599,433	2,055,439,887	2,100,661,441	2,017,365,900	2,099,828,254	2,141,827,143
1.2 Financial Support Program	223,360,801	223,360,801	228,636,029	254,152,298	245,424,228	205,167,882	163,442,979	120,356,006
1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	1,100,616,904	1,100,616,904	1,071,070,613	1,062,766,538	1,121,838,509	1,026,146,338	1,118,351,751	1,095,616,261
Strategic Outcome 1 Subtotal	**3,455,074,425**	**3,455,074,425**	**3,375,306,075**	**3,372,358,723**	**3,467,924,178**	**3,248,680,120**	**3,381,622,984**	**3,357,799,410**
Strategic Outcome 2: Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace								
2.1 Canada Remembers Program	50,034,622	50,034,622	50,557,923	47,029,991	54,111,348	45,528,370	41,150,530	42,969,111
Strategic Outcome 2 Subtotal	50,034,622	50,034,622	50,557,923	47,029,991	54,111,348	45,528,370	41,150,530	42,969,111
Strategic Outcome 3: Veterans' rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio								
3.1 Veterans Ombudsman	5,790,009	5,790,009	5,779,872	5,775,308	5,312,011	4,578,484	4,953,006	5,073,438
Strategic Outcome 3 Subtotal	5,790,009	5,790,009	5,779,872	5,775,308	5,312,011	4,578,484	4,953,006	5,073,438
VAC Internal Services								
VAC Internal Services Subtotal	66,079,710	66,079,710	66,553,105	66,184,186	78,092,980	78,092,980	85,846,369	80,385,882
Total	**3,576,978,766**	**3,576,978,766**	**3,498,196,975**	**3,491,348,208**	**3,605,440,517**	**3,376,879,954**	**3,513,572,889**	**3,486,227,841**

Alignment of Spending with the Whole-of-Government Framework

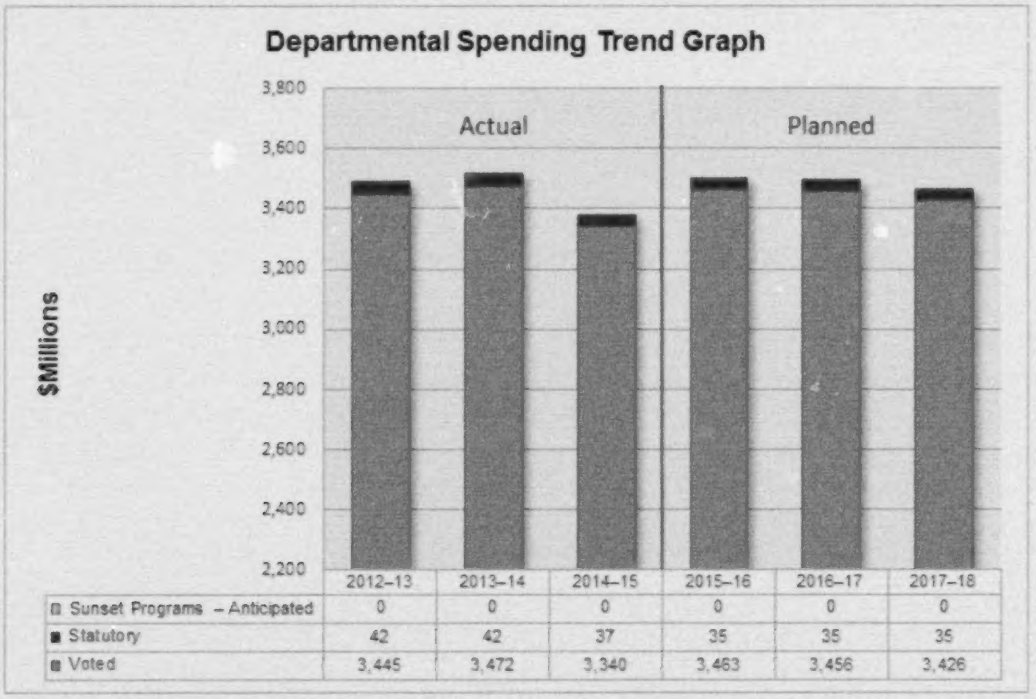
Alignment of 2014–15 Actual Spending with the Whole-of-Government Framework[v] (dollars)

Strategic Outcome	Program	Spending Area	Government of Canada Outcome	2014–15 Actual Spending
1) Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans.	1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	Economic Affairs	Income Security and Employment for Canadians	2,017,365,900
	1.2 Financial Support Program	Economic Affairs	Income Security and Employment for Canadians	205,167,882
	1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	Social Affairs	Healthy Canadians	1,026,146,338
2) Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace.	2.1 Canada Remembers Program	Social Affairs	A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage	45,528,370
3) Veterans' rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio.	3.1 Veterans Ombudsman	Economic Affairs	Income Security and Employment for Canadians	4,578,484

Total Spending by Spending Area (dollars)

Spending Area	Total Planned Spending	Total Actual Spending
Economic Affairs	2,360,247,530	2,227,112,266
Social Affairs	1,150,651,526	1,071,674,708
International Affairs	–	–
Government Affairs	–	–

Departmental Spending Trend



	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Sunset Programs – Anticipated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory	42	42	37	35	35	35
Voted	3,445	3,472	3,340	3,463	3,456	3,426

As noted in the Budgetary Performance Summary, Veterans Affairs Canada's spending fluctuates each year due to the demand-driven nature of its programs, which are based on Veterans' needs and entitlements.

Changing demographics in the Veteran population means the number of war service Veterans coming forward for benefits is decreasing while those for New Veterans Charter programs continues to increase. Departmental spending in 2014–15 was lower than previous years as a result of a decrease in expenditures on VAC's more traditional programs such as Disability Pensions ($90 million decrease compared to 2013–14). This decrease was partially offset by the increased spending on New Veterans Charter programs such as Disability Awards, Earnings Loss and Supplementary Retirement Benefits. Current demographic projections anticipate that over the next four years the number of individuals accessing VAC's traditional programs will continue to decline, most significantly for war service Veterans. As new programs are introduced, the number of CAF Veterans accessing programs will continue to increase and the demand for the existing New Veterans Charter programs will continue. Accordingly, given forecasts of demand and new initiatives underway, the Department anticipates increased spending in 2015–16.

Expenditures by Vote

For information on the Veterans Affairs Canada's organizational voted and statutory expenditures, consult the *Public Accounts of Canada 2015*,[vi] which is available on the Public Works and Government Services Canada website.[vii]

Section II: Analysis of Programs by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome 1: *Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans*

Program 1.1: Disability and Death Compensation

Description

This program supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, survivors, spouses/common-law partners, dependants and civilians whose lives have been permanently affected as a result of service to their country. In recognition of the effects of service-related disabilities or death, compensation is provided in the form of: monthly disability pensions; disability awards paid as a lump sum, annual payment or a combination of both; and monthly allowances. The amount of benefit awarded is dependent on the severity of the disability and its impact on daily functioning. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
2,131,096,720	2,131,096,720	2,100,661,441	2,017,365,900	(113,730,820)

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents [FTEs]) [4]

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
582.0	632.0	50.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans service-related disabilities are recognized	% of favourable disability benefit decisions that are made without requiring a level of review or appeal	80%	89%

[4] This *2014–15 Departmental Performance Report* uses the same staff allocation approach used to produce the *2014–15 Report on Plans and Priorities*, to maintain consistency. The Department has adjusted how and where it allocates staff to more accurately reflect where resources are required to serve Veterans. This new approach is reflected in the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities*. As a result, some programs show a significant change in staff numbers from previous years.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada exceeded the performance target for this program, in part by introducing two initiatives:

- Adjudicators now call disability benefit applicants who, in the absence of new information, would not be entitled to benefits for any of the conditions claimed in their application. Adjudicators are able to confirm if the Veteran has any further information to provide to help them rule favorably on the application. This new process contributed to an increase in the favorable rate for first-level applications.

- A new decision model was introduced that streamlined and expedited claims processing for certain medical conditions—reducing a layer of administration for applicants.

The Department's budget fluctuates each year due to the demand-driven nature of its programs. While forecasting helps ensure enough funding is available, expenditures are only incurred when Veterans come forward to use the program or service. The difference between planned spending and actual spending in Program 1.1 mostly relates to program uptake, which was less than expected. This is a normal fluctuation, given that forecasting is typically done many months in advance of the reporting period and based on assumptions that can vary from year to year.

Sub-Program 1.1.1: Disability Pension Program

Description

This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members who applied for a disability pension prior to April 1, 2006, survivors, dependants and civilians for the effects of a service related disability and/or death. Compensation is provided in the form of a monthly disability pension. Disability pensioners who are hospitalized or receiving outpatient care for their pensioned condition are eligible to receive an additional allowance for that period. This program also recognizes and compensates those in receipt of a disability pension for the distinct effects that disabilities may have on clothing, on an individual's ability to perform personal care, and exceptional health needs. This is provided through a monthly allowance. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1,569,540,360	1,508,804,786	(60,735,574)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
291.0	316.0	25.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on disability pension applications	% of disability pension decisions rendered within 12 weeks	80%	64%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department has continued to examine its adjudication processes in order to improve service for Veterans. For example, adjudicators now call disability benefit applicants who, in the absence of new information, would not be entitled to benefits for any of the conditions claimed in their application. Adjudicators are able to confirm if the Veteran has any further information to provide to help them rule favorably on the application. This new process contributed to an increase in the favorable rate for first-level applications.

Other measures have been taken to expedite decision making, including funding allocated through Budget 2015 to hire permanent and temporary staff at all stages of the disability benefits process to provide timely, quality service to Veterans. A new decision model was also introduced that streamlined and expedited claims processing for certain medical conditions—reducing a layer of administration for applicants. The Department is exploring the potential to develop other similar decision models.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.1.1: Disability Pensions

Description

This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans who applied for a Disability Pension prior to April 1, 2006, survivors, dependants and civilians for the effects of a service-related disability and/or death. Under the *Pension Act*, compensation is provided in the form of a monthly Disability Pension. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1,464,269,907	1,403,782,863	(60,487,044)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
279.4	303.4	24.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely payment of their disability pensions	% of payments processed within a week of a favourable decision being rendered on a disability pension first application	80%	69%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Budget 2015 funding allocations will be used to hire additional disability benefits staff to ensure Veterans receive their benefits in a timely manner.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.1.2: Exceptional Incapacity Allowance

Description

This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans who applied for a Disability Pension prior to April 1, 2006, and civilians for the distinct effects that service-related disabilities may have on exceptional health needs. A pensioner who is in receipt of a pension at a 98% rate or more, and is suffering an exceptional incapacity that is a consequence of or caused by the pensioned disability, shall be awarded a monthly allowance. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
14,325,254	15,064,803	739,549

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
5.8	6.3	0.5

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Exceptional Incapacity Allowance	% of Exceptional Incapacity Allowance decisions rendered within 12 weeks	80%	86%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department made changes in 2013–14 to improve how it tracks, monitors, and reports on Exceptional Incapacity Allowance (EIA) applications. This effort helped to improve EIA processing times in 2014–15.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.1.3: Treatment Allowance

Description

This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans who applied for a Disability Pension prior to April 1, 2006, and civilians for the effects of a service-related disability. Disability Pensioners who are hospitalized or receiving outpatient care for their pensioned condition are eligible to receive an additional allowance for that period to temporarily compensate them at a 100% pension rate. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
795,127	710,249	(84,878)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1.7	1.9	0.2

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans are compensated for periods of acute care resulting from their pensioned conditions	# of Veterans who received a Treatment Allowance during the fiscal year	200	184

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The number of Treatment Allowance program recipients is steadily decreasing. Over the next five years, the number is expected to continue to decrease, consistent with the decline in Disability Pension recipients.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.1.4: Other Allowances

Description

The program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans who applied for a Disability Pension prior to April 1, 2006, and civilians for the effects of a service-related disability. The program recognizes and compensates those in receipt of a Disability Pension for the distinct effects that disabilities may have on clothing. A Disability Pensioner who is totally disabled, whether by reason of military service or not, and in need of attendance is awarded an Attendance Allowance. Support is provided in the form of a monthly allowance. Educational Assistance can be provided to eligible dependent children of pensioners who died as the result of military service or were pensioned at the 48% rate or greater at the time of death. This program is provided through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
90,150,072	89,246,871	(903,201)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
4.1	4.4	0.3

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on special award applications for Clothing Allowance and Attendance Allowance	% of special awards (Attendance Allowance and Clothing Allowance) decisions rendered within 6 weeks	80%	87%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Business process improvements initiated in 2013–14 helped the Department exceed its 2014–15 performance target, with 87% of Attendance Allowance and Clothing Allowance decisions made within six weeks.

Sub-Program 1.1.2: Disability Awards Program

Description

Under the New Veterans Charter in effect since April 1, 2006, this program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members, and in some cases surviving spouses/common-law partners and surviving dependent children, for death, detention and the non-economic effects of service-related disability including pain and suffering, functional loss and the effects of permanent impairment on the lives of Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans and their families. This program also recognizes and compensates those in receipt of a disability award for the effects that disabilities may have on clothing. Compensation is provided in the form of a monetary award paid as a lump sum, annual payment(s) or a combination of both and a monthly allowance for clothing. Educational Assistance can be provided to eligible dependants of Veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members who died as a result of military service. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
561,556,360	508,561,114	(52,995,246)[5]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
291.0	316.0	25.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Disability Awards	% of Disability Award decisions rendered within 12 weeks	80%	41%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department has continued to examine its adjudication processes in order to improve service for Veterans. Adjudicators now call disability benefit applicants who, in the absence of new information, would not be entitled to benefits for any of the conditions claimed in their application. Adjudicators are able to confirm if the Veteran has any

[5] The difference between actual and planned spending is mostly attributable to fewer than forecasted Veterans applying for the demand-driven Disability Award.

further information to provide to help them rule favorably on the application. This new process contributed to an increase in the favorable rate for first-level applications.

Other measures have been taken to expedite decision making, including funding allocated through Budget 2015 to hire permanent and temporary staff at all stages of the disability benefits process to provide timely, quality service to Veterans.

The Department is using evidence-informed decision models, which now account for about 30% of all first level disability benefits decisions. The Department is exploring the potential to develop other similar decision models.

The Department is also working with its partners to speed up access to service health records. Investments in additional resources for the Department of National Defence (DND), and the continued migration of digital files and processes, has substantially improved turnaround times for records held by DND/CAF.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.2.1: Disability Awards

Description

The program recognizes and compensates eligible Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans, and in some cases surviving spouses/common-law partners and surviving dependent children, for death, detention and the non-economic effects of service-related disability including pain and suffering, functional loss and the effects of permanent impairment on the lives of Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans and their families. This program also recognizes and compensates those in receipt of a Disability Award for the distinct effects that disabilities may have on clothing. Compensation is provided in the form of a monetary award and a monthly allowance. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
560,780,259	507,729,145	(53,051,114)[6]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
290.4	315.4	25.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely payment of their Disability Award	% of Disability Award first application payments processed within a week of receiving the Veteran's decision on their method of payment	80%	92%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Of the 5,500 disability award first application payments processed, 92% were completed within a week of receiving the Veteran's decision on their preferred method of payment.

[6] The difference between actual and planned spending is mostly attributable to fewer than forecasted Veterans applying for the demand-driven Disability Award.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.1.2.2: Educational Assistance

Description

The program recognizes and compensates eligible dependants of Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans for the effects of a service-related death. Educational Assistance can be provided for four years or 36 academic months for the cost of university, college, or trade courses. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
776,101	831,969	55,868

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
0.6	0.6	0.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Dependent children of eligible deceased Veterans/members receive financial support to attend higher education	# of dependent children who attended higher education through the Educational Assistance Program	75	112

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

One hundred and twelve dependent children received support through the Educational Assistance Program, which provides tax free benefits to help post-secondary students with expenses such as tuition, books and other school supplies, and monthly living allowances.

Program 1.2: Financial Support Program

Description

This program provides income support to eligible Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors. The intent of the support is to ensure that recipients have income which is adequate to meet their basic needs. In recognition of the effects of war time service in the case of War Service Veterans, income support may be paid in the form of a monthly War Veterans Allowance. The program also provides economic support to Canadian Armed Forces Veterans, survivors, spouses/common-law partners and dependants for the economic impact that a career ending and/or service related injury or death can have on a Veteran's ability to earn income, advance in a career or save for retirement.

Compensation is provided in the form of a monthly income support payment. A lump-sum supplementary retirement benefit is available to those who are totally and permanently incapacitated. There is also a monthly allowance available for those with severe and permanent impairments. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
223,360,801	223,360,801	245,424,228	205,167,882	(18,192,919)[7]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
39.0	42.1	3.1

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans' and other program recipients' needs for food, shelter, clothing, health care and transportation are met	% Earnings Loss Benefit recipients whose family income is above the low income measure.	90%	94%

[7] The difference between actual and planned spending is mostly attributable to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Financial Support Program.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Program delivery staff continues to receive specialist support and training related to the Financial Support program. These supports have resulted in timely benefits and services being provided to more than 8,000 Veterans and their families.

VAC continues to review and simplify written materials to ensure they are clear and easy for Veterans to understand.

Sub-Program 1.2.1: Financial Benefits

Description

The program provides economic support to eligible Veterans, survivors, spouses/common-law partners and dependants for the economic impact that a career ending and/or service-related injury or death can have on a Veteran's ability to earn income, advance in a career or save for retirement. Support is provided to those approved for the Rehabilitation Program; those who have completed the program and have not yet found employment; those who were eligible for the program but are unable to participate due to permanent and severe impairment; and those who have received a disability award for a physical or mental condition which causes permanent and severe impairments for which rehabilitation services have been approved. Compensation is provided in the form of monthly income support payments. A lump-sum supplementary retirement benefit is available for those who are totally and permanently incapacitated. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
207,068,831	195,190,238	(11,878,593)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
33.2	35.8	2.6

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans and other program recipients are able to fund food, shelter, clothing, health care and transportation	% of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans participating in the VAC Rehabilitation and Vocational Assistance Program who report that their income during their participation in the program was sufficient to meet their basic living expenses	70%	92%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Over the last three years, 92% of the individuals who provided information upon completing the Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance Program reported that their income while participating was sufficient to meet their basic living expenses, exceeding the performance target of 75%.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.2.1.1: Earnings Loss

Description

This program recognizes the economic impact a military career ending or service-related disability may have on a Canadian Armed Forces Veteran's ability to earn income following release from the Canadian Armed Forces. To meet their basic needs, eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans participating in the Veterans Affairs' Rehabilitation Program are provided with temporary income replacement in the form of a monthly allowance so that a participant's income does not fall below 75% of gross pre-release military salary. Where a Veteran who had been participating in the Rehabilitation Program is not able to participate in suitable gainful employment, the support continues until the Veteran reaches the age of 65 years. Income support can be paid to the survivor and/or orphans of a Veteran who dies as a result of service-related injury or disease until the Veteran would have reached the age of 65 years. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
169,637,190	159,356,822	(10,280,368)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
25.5	27.6	2.1

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions for Earnings Loss benefits	% of Earnings Loss decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	86%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Of the approximately 1,700 Earnings Loss Benefit decisions rendered, 86% were completed within four weeks, exceeding the 80% performance target.

An annual income verification process for Earnings Loss Benefit recipients ensures they receive the financial support to which they are entitled.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.2.1.2: Canadian Forces Income Support

Description

This program ensures that eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans have a minimum level of income to meet basic needs while they are engaged in job search activities. The program provides a monthly temporary income support to low income Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who have completed VAC's Rehabilitation Program and are capable of achieving suitable gainful employment but who have not yet obtained employment. This program is also available to survivors or orphans of Veterans in certain circumstances. Program recipients must participate in an approved job placement program and continue to meet the income test to maintain eligibility for this benefit. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
584,425	983,920	399,495

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
3.0	3.2	0.2

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Canadian Forces Income Support	% of Canadian Forces Income Support decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	85%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The performance target for the Canadian Forces Income Support program was exceeded, with 85% of the applications being completed within four weeks.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.2.1.3: Supplementary Retirement Benefit

Description

This program compensates eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans for lost opportunities to contribute to retirement pensions because they are unable to work following their release from the Canadian Armed Forces. Veterans must have been assessed as totally and permanently incapacitated during their participation in Veterans Affairs' Rehabilitation Program and eligible for extended Earnings Loss benefits. The benefit, a lump-sum payment equal to 2% of the total amount of Earnings Loss benefits that was paid to a Veteran before income offsets, is generally paid when the Veteran reaches the age of 65 years. Survivors of Veterans who die as a result of a service-related injury or disease are also eligible for this benefit, payable after the Veteran would have reached the age of 65 years. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
104,158	95,020	(9,138)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
0.4	0.4	0.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Supplementary Retirement Benefits	% of Supplementary Retirement Benefit decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	91%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department processed 91% of Supplementary Retirement Benefit decisions within four weeks, exceeding the performance target of 80%.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.2.1.4: Permanent Impairment Allowance

Description

This program recognizes the economic impact on employment potential and career advancement caused by severe and permanent service-related disabilities. The program ensures that eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans with severe permanent impairments have an income sufficient to meet basic needs. A monthly allowance is payable to Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who received a Disability Award for physical or mental health problems that are creating a permanent and severe impairment and for which Rehabilitation services have been approved. This program is delivered through grants.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
36,743,058	34,754,476	(1,988,582)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
4.3	4.6	0.3

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Permanent Impairment Allowance	% of Permanent Impairment Allowance decisions rendered within 12 weeks	80%	61%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department completed approximately 800 Permanent Impairment Allowance decisions. With Budget 2015 funding, the Department is hiring additional staff which should help improve turn-around times to better serve Veterans and their families.

Sub-Program 1.2.2: War Veterans Allowance

Description

This program is a form of financial assistance available to eligible Veterans, Merchant Navy Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors, dependants and orphans. In recognition of war service, qualified persons are provided with a regular, monthly income to meet basic needs. Eligibility for War Veterans Allowance is determined by the wartime service of a Veteran or qualified civilian, age or health, family income and residency. As well, a surviving spouse, a surviving common-law partner or orphan may qualify for a War Veterans Allowance. Recipients must report all sources of income on an annual basis or as changes in income occur. War Veterans Allowance recipients may also be eligible to receive financial assistance for emergencies or unexpected contingencies through the Assistance Fund. This program uses funding from the following transfer payments: War Veterans Allowances and Civilian War Allowances, Assistance in accordance with the provisions of the *Assistance Fund Regulations*, Assistance to Canadian Veterans - Overseas District, Veterans Insurance Actuarial Liability Adjustment (statutory), Returned Soldiers Insurance Actuarial Liability Adjustment (statutory), Repayments under Section 15 of the *War Service Grants Act* (statutory) and Re-Establishment Credits under Section 8 of the *War Service Grants Act* (statutory).

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
16,291,970	9,977,644	(6,314,326)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
5.9	6.3	0.4

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans and their survivors receive timely decisions on applications for War Veterans Allowance	% of War Veterans Allowance decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	93%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department processed approximately 450 War Veterans Allowance decisions, 93% of which were completed within four weeks, exceeding the 80% target.

Because the Disability Pension is no longer considered when calculating the War Veterans Allowance, the Department reviewed all files to ensure any Veteran who was affected by the change would have their benefits adjusted. The review of files to remove the Disability Pension offset is now complete.

Program 1.3: Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

Description

This program is designed to improve or maintain the physical, mental and social well-being of eligible Veterans, Reserve Force personnel on a period of Class A service or on a period of 180 days or less of Class B service in the Canadian Armed Forces, civilians, and their survivors and dependants and other individuals, promote independence, and assist in keeping them at home and in their own communities by providing a continuum of care. The program provides access to rehabilitation services, employment support, health benefits, home care and long-term care. This program is delivered through operating funds, grants and contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1,100,616,904	1,100,616,904	1,121,838,509	1,026,146,338	(74,470,566)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1,443.0	1,473.2	30.2

Performance Results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Eligible Veterans are able to remain in their own homes and communities	% of Veterans in receipt of the Veterans Independence Program who remain in their homes	90%	96%
Payments for health care/ treatment benefits are processed in an efficient manner that reduces financial burden on recipients	% of payments made directly to providers through use of the Veterans Health Care Card (reducing out of pocket expenses for Veterans)	70%	98.5%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Case managers were given the authority to approve most treatment benefits and services identified within a Veteran's case plan in support of their progress toward wellness.

With respect to mental health services, the Department also made several improvements, including:

- Implementing, in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, a tailored version of Mental Health First Aid, to provide Veterans and their families with education on mental illness; decrease stigma; and promote help-seeking when needed.

- Developing, in partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Ottawa Hospital, an online Operational Stress Injury (OSI) Resource for Caregivers providing information on OSIs; available treatments; and adaptive caregiver self-care strategies.

The Department enhanced efforts to locate and serve homeless Veterans by strengthening existing relationships, leveraging new partnerships, and playing a leadership role in ensuring Veterans issues are understood as part of the wider government and community response to homelessness. VAC collaborated with other government departments and community organizations to reach out, identify, and refer homeless Veterans to the Department for help.

Sub-Program 1.3.1: Rehabilitation

Description

This program provides eligible Veterans with timely access to the medical, psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation or vocational assistance services needed to address re-establishment barriers associated with military career ending health problems or health problems resulting primarily from military service. The objectives of rehabilitation services are improved health and functional capacity, active community participation/integration and/or participation in the civilian workforce. The Rehabilitation program is delivered through a case management process, and eligible participants access medical and psychosocial rehabilitation services and benefits through community based providers. Vocational services are delivered by a national contractor. Under certain circumstances, survivors and spouses of eligible Veterans may be eligible to receive vocational assistance services and rehabilitation services. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
29,644,690	25,804,518	(3,840,172)[8]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
28.5	29.2	0.7

Performance Results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for the Rehabilitation and Vocational Assistance Program	% of Rehabilitation Program eligibility decisions rendered within 2 weeks	80%	78%
Eligible Veterans have the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve their occupational goal	% of program recipients who report they are "very prepared" or "somewhat prepared" to find suitable employment at program completion	80%	81%
	% of program recipients who report they are "very prepared" or "somewhat prepared" to keep suitable employment at program completion	80%	76%

[8] The difference between actual and planned spending can be attributed to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Health Care Program.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Approximately 2,300 Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance Program eligibility decisions were made in 2014–15. The Department is increasing its complement of case managers to help ensure the two-week service standard is achieved into the future.

Over the last three years, 81% of the individuals who provided information upon completion of this program reported that they are prepared to find suitable employment, yet fewer (76%) reported they are prepared to keep suitable employment. A new contract for vocational rehabilitation and vocational assistance services provides for on-the-job follow-up/evaluation at the six-week, six-month and one-year points following employment, helping ensure recipients are better prepared to keep suitable employment.

Sub-Program 1.3.2: Career Transition Services

Description

This program supports the transition to civilian life of eligible Veterans and survivors by providing access to services that will assist them in having the knowledge, skills and plan necessary to prepare for and obtain suitable civilian employment. Veterans Affairs Canada will reimburse eligible Veterans and survivors for these services, up to a lifetime maximum of $1,000 including taxes. This program uses funding from the following transfer payment: Career Transition Services.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
1,171,972	1,140,315	(31,657)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
7.1	7.3	0.2

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Career Transition Services	% of Career Transition eligibility decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	96%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department completed 160 Career Transition Services eligibility decisions, 96% were competed within four weeks, exceeding the 80% performance target.

VAC is able to deliver this program more efficiently now that Veterans are able to apply online through *My VAC Account*.

Sub-Program 1.3.3: Health Care Benefits

Description

In recognition of their service to the country, the program provides eligible Veterans, Reserve Force personnel on a period of Class A service or on a period of 180 days or less of Class B service in the Canadian Armed Forces, civilians and other individuals with access to treatment benefits considered to be an appropriate response to their assessed health needs. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
360,873,777	305,700,574	(55,173,203)[9]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
214.1	219.1	5.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on Health Care Benefit reviews	% of Health Care Benefit review decisions rendered within 12 weeks	80%	73%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department continued to review the process for providing Health Care Benefit decisions. Letters relating to Health Care Benefit decisions were updated to ensure clarity of information provided to Veterans and the requirement for prescriptions for physiotherapy, podiatry, and psychology services was eliminated—making it easier for Veterans to access these services.

With Budget 2015 funding, the Department will hire additional staff to further support this process in order to deliver decisions to Veterans faster.

[9] The difference between actual and planned spending can be attributed to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Health Care Program.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.3.1: Health Care Benefits and Services

Description

In recognition of their service to the country, the program provides eligible Veterans, certain Reserve Force personnel, civilians, and their survivors and dependants and other individuals with access to appropriate treatment benefits for their health needs. Treatment benefits include medical, surgical or dental examinations or treatment; surgical or prosthetic devices and aids and their maintenance; home adaptations to accommodate the use of devices or aids; preventative health care; pharmaceuticals; and travel and other expenses incurred to access these benefits. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
360,698,777	305,522,564	(55,176,213)[10]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
212.1	217.1	5.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans and other program recipients have timely access to the Health Care Benefit program	% of Health Care Identification cards sent within 6 weeks	80%	100%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department issued approximately 19,000 Health Care Cards in 2014–15, 100% of which were within the six week performance standard.

[10] The difference between actual and planned spending can be attributed to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Health Care Program.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.3.2: Health Benefits Program – PSHCP

Description

This program ensures that eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and survivors who are currently ineligible for health coverage have access to group family health insurance through the Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP). Enrollment and participation in the Plan is voluntary, participants pay their own premiums, and membership is subject to the terms and conditions of PSHCP.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
175,000	178,010	3,010

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
2.0	2.0	0.0

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions for the Public Service Health Care Plan	% of Veterans Affairs Canada Public Service Health Care Plan eligibility decisions rendered within 4 weeks	80%	83%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Of the approximately 650 Public Service Health Care Plan eligibility decisions made, 83% were completed within four weeks, exceeding the performance target of 80%.

Sub-Program 1.3.4: Veterans Independence Program (VIP)

Description

This program provides funding to eligible Veterans, Reserve Force personnel on a period of Class A service or on a period of 180 days or less of Class B service in the Canadian Armed Forces, civilians, as well as survivors and primary caregivers so that they can access home and community care and support services to meet their physical, mental and social needs. This assistance allows them to remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. The services and benefits which may be funded include home care services and personal care (housekeeping, access to nutrition, grounds maintenance, ambulatory), home adaptations and transportation services. Veterans Independence Program housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services are also available to eligible survivors and primary caregivers. This program is delivered through grants and contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
348,778,905	352,804,620	4,025,715

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
314.0	321.3	7.3

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Eligible Veterans' needs for home care and support are met	% of Veterans Independence Program recipients who rely on the program to remain in their homes	80%	95%
	% of Veterans and other recipients who report that the Veterans Independence Program meets their needs	80%	83%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department exceeded both performance targets for this program, thanks to advances in three areas:

- The grant funding payment process was successfully implemented, which provides all recipients an upfront grant for the Housekeeping and Grounds Maintenance elements.

- Online status tracking of VIP applications via *My VAC Account* is now available.
- VIP application forms were streamlined, contributing to a more user-friendly application process. Program decision letters are reviewed regularly to ensure that the language is clear and understandable.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.4.1: VIP – Home Care Benefits and Services

Description

This program provides funding to eligible Veterans, certain Reserve Force personnel, civilians, as well as survivors and primary caregivers so that they can access home and community care and support services to meet their physical, mental and social needs. This assistance allows them to remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. The services and benefits which may be funded include home care services and personal care (housekeeping, access to nutrition, grounds maintenance, ambulatory), home adaptations and transportation services. Veterans Independence Program housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services are also available to eligible survivors and primary caregivers. This program is delivered through grants and contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
344,953,223	349,568,509	4,615,286

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
306.9	314.0	7.1

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans are able to access the VIP services they need	% of Veterans and other program recipients who report they are able to find people to help them with the Veterans Independence Program services they need.	80%	96%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department exceeded its 80% performance target for this program, with 96% of Veterans and other program recipients reporting being able to find providers for the Veterans Independence Program services they need.

The Department also streamlined business processes and guidelines allowing the program to be more responsive to the changing needs of Veterans.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.4.2: VIP – Other Services

Description

This program provides funding to eligible Veterans, certain Reserve Force personnel and civilians to allow them to remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. The services and benefits which may be funded include ambulatory health care services (health assessments, diagnostic services, and social and recreational services), transportation services between their principal residence and the location of the social activity or to the nearest appropriate public transportation service, and home modifications necessary in order to assist a client in performing the normal basic activities of daily living. This program is delivered through contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
3,825,682	3,236,111	(589,571)[11]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
7.1	7.3	0.2

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans are able to access the VIP services they need	% of Veterans and other program recipients who report they are able to find people to help them with the Veterans Independence Program services they need	80%	96%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

This year, 96% of Veterans and other program recipients were able to find providers for the VIP services they need, exceeding the 80% performance target.

To be more responsive to changing needs of Canadian Veterans, the Department streamlined business processes and guidelines.

[11] The difference between actual and planned spending can be attributed to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Health Care Program.

Sub-Program 1.3.5: Intermediate and Long Term Care

Description

The program supports eligible Veterans and other individuals who require nursing home type care to meet their needs. The program works in cooperation with provincial agencies and long-term care facilities to support eligible Veterans and other individuals in an appropriate long-term care setting. This program is delivered through operating funds and contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
284,232,450	262,480,226	(21,752,224)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
149.9	153.4	3.5

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on Long Term Care support	% of Long Term Care decisions completed within 10 weeks	80%	77%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

A new Quality Management framework will help ensure applications and decision letters are finalized appropriately for Long Term Care applicants. Recently implemented performance monitoring will help the Department achieve its performance target.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.5.1: Non-departmental Institutions – VIP

Description

The program supports eligible Veterans and other individuals who require long-term care to meet their needs. The program provides funding through the Veterans Independence Program for intermediate care services in community facilities. The program works in cooperation with provincial agencies and long-term care facilities to support eligible Veterans and other individuals in an appropriate long-term care setting. This program uses funding from the following transfer payment: Contributions to Veterans, under the Veterans Independence Program.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
68,502,076	58,522,205	(9,979,871)[12]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
78.5	80.3	1.8

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans are satisfied with the services they are receiving in their intermediate care facility	% of Veterans and other program recipients who report they are satisfied with the services they are receiving in their intermediate care facility	80%	87%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

This program has exceeded its performance target with 87% of Veterans receiving departmental support for their long-term care needs being satisfied with the services offered in their intermediate care facility.

[12] The difference between actual and planned spending can be attributed to fewer than forecasted recipients applying for the demand-driven Health Care Program.

Sub-Sub-Program 1.3.5.2: Non-departmental Institutions – Long Term Care

Description

The program supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and other individuals who require nursing home type care to meet their needs. The program provides funding for intermediate and chronic care in community and contract beds in facilities across the country. The program works in cooperation with provincial agencies and long-term care facilities to support eligible Veterans and other individuals in an appropriate long-term care setting. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
215,730,374	203,958,021	(11,772,353)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
71.4	73.0	1.6

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Eligible Veterans receive timely reimbursement of the Department's contribution for care in a community bed	% of payments processed within 8 weeks after a Veteran is admitted to a community bed, under the Long Term Care program	80%	81%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

A new Quality Management framework will help ensure applications and decision letters are finalized appropriately for Long Term Care applicants. Recently implemented performance monitoring will help the Department improve its performance target.

Sub-Program 1.3.6: Ste. Anne's Hospital

Description

Ste. Anne's Hospital supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members and civilians so that their physical, mental and social needs are met. The Hospital provides high quality long-term and respite care services as well as a vast range of programs to eligible Veterans and civilians. Through its Day Centre, it is able to offer support services to those still residing in their communities and through the Ste. Anne's Centre, it provides mental health services to Veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
75,915,110	78,216,084	2,300,974

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
729.3	742.9	13.6

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Eligible Veterans are provided with long-term care and support services	% of patients who report they are very satisfied or satisfied on the satisfaction survey (global score)	80%	93.4%
	Rate of complaints per 1,000 patient days	0.67	0.97

Performanc Analysis and Lessons Learned

The transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital has been an ongoing priority for Veterans Affairs Canada. Prior to March 31, the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec agreed to the terms to transfer Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec. Negotiations were completed and the transfer agreement was finalized and signed by all parties in April, 2015.

Throughout negotiations, the Government of Canada has maintained and insisted on key priorities, including:

- ensuring continued Veteran priority access to Ste. Anne's Hospital and its exceptional care and services offered in the official language of their choice; and
- protecting the interests of the Hospital's employees.

Strategic Outcome 2: *Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace*

Program 2.1: Canada Remembers Program

Description

Canadian Veterans and those who died in service have made valuable contributions to the development of Canada. Under the authority of P.C. Order 1965–688 this program ensures that Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their sacrifices and achievements are preserved. Canada Remembers activities promote the following outcomes: Canadians are knowledgeable about the efforts of Veterans and those who died in service to Canada; Canadian military milestones and the Veterans who participated in them are publicly recognized; communities and other groups lead remembrance activities; symbols erected to honour Veterans and those who served are maintained in perpetuity on behalf of Canadians; and, the estates of eligible Veterans receive funeral and burial assistance. Encouraging pride in shared military history, celebrating the contributions and acknowledging the sacrifices of those who served, and preserving symbols to mark their courage all contribute to the Government of Canada's outcome of a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage. This program is delivered through operating funds, grants and contributions.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
50,034,622	50,034,622	54,111,348	45,528,370	(4,506,252)

Human Resources (FTEs)[13]

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
121.0	90.2	(30.8)

[13] This *2014–15 Departmental Performance Report* uses the same staff allocation approach used to produce the *2014–15 Report on Plans and Priorities*, to maintain consistency. The Department has adjusted how and where it allocates staff to more accurately reflect where resources are required to serve Veterans. This new approach is reflected in the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities*. As a result, some programs show a significant change in staff numbers from previous years.

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved	# of Canadians who participate in remembrance on Remembrance Day at the National Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ottawa and on VAC's Facebook page during the period surrounding Veterans' Week (October 21 to November 13)	140,000 (30,000 at ceremony and 110,000 on Facebook)	2,574,130 (50,000 at ceremony and 2,524,130 on Facebook)

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada marked the centennial of the start of First World War and the 75th anniversary of Canada's entry in the Second World War. This was done through various ceremonies, learning resources, social media, funding of initiatives across Canada and the creation of permanent altars for the *Books of Remembrance* in the Memorial Chamber on Parliament Hill. The Department also continued planning the construction of a permanent Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in Vimy, France, scheduled to open on April 9, 2017.

On November 11, 2014, the National War Memorial was rededicated to recognize all Canadians who served in the past, who serve today and who will serve in the future. To ensure that the memorial lists the dates of Canada's five most costly military engagements in terms of lives lost, the dates of the Afghanistan mission and the South African War were added to the National War Memorial on November 11, 2014, along with the previously inscribed dates of the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War.

VAC commemorated the end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan through government-wide National Day of Honour activities and the announcement of a National Memorial to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan to be established in Ottawa.

Sub-Program 2.1.1: Public Education and Awareness

Description

Public knowledge is an essential component in honouring and preserving the memory of the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service. This activity increases knowledge by creating and distributing resources focusing on Canadian military history and remembrance, as well as promotional products such as posters and pins. Learning resources are distributed free of charge, multimedia and interactive tools are made available on the Canada Remembers website, and social media tools are used to expand VAC's reach. Knowledge and awareness is also fostered by supporting the Historica-Dominion Institute's Encounters with Canada program, providing interpretive guided tours to visitors at European sites and supporting summer-time guided tours which interpret the National War Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to visitors. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
9,445,894	9,312,870	(133,024)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
33.9	25.3	(8.6)

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Canadians, especially youth, have increased knowledge and understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service	% of educators using VAC educational resources who report increased youth knowledge and understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service	80%	99%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

VAC greatly exceeded its public education and awareness performance targets.

The Department created learning resources to engage youth and educators in remembrance during Veterans' Week and supported the "Canada Remembers" theme week at Encounters with Canada at Ottawa's Terry Fox Centre.

VAC produced and distributed resources to commemorate key Canadian military anniversaries—the centennial of the First World War, the 70th anniversaries of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, and the Italian Campaign, and the 75th anniversary of the Second World War—as well as the end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

VAC added content to its *Heroes Remember* online feature recounting the stories of Veterans from across the country.

The Department continued planning for a permanent Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in Vimy, France, scheduled to open on April 9, 2017, the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Sub-Program 2.1.2: Ceremonies and Events

Description

VAC organizes ceremonies and events, both in Canada and overseas, to remind Canadians of the legacy of those who served Canada and to demonstrate Canada's leadership in recognizing their service. VAC works closely with the voluntary sector, quasi-governmental and international organizations, including foreign, regional and local government institutions on commemorative events, including Veterans' Week and significant military milestones that honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice. VAC assists with burial ceremonies when remains of Canadian soldiers of the First or Second World War are discovered. World War and Korean War medals are also issued to recognize Veterans, as is the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation. This program uses operating funds and funding from the following transfer payment: Canadian Veterans Association of the United Kingdom Grant.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
5,601,491	5,481,039	(120,452)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
34.8	26.0	(8.8)

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Veterans, those who died in service, and important Canadian military milestones are publicly recognized and marked regionally, nationally and internationally	# of national, regional and international remembrance ceremonies and events held to mark Canadian military milestones	800	410

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada worked with other federal partners to plan and execute a National Day of Honour (May 9, 2014) in Ottawa and across the country to mark the end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, including the announcement of a National Memorial to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan, to be unveiled in Ottawa in 2017.

The Department planned and provided travel assistance of Second World War Veterans to attend 70th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy activities in France,

including a signature overseas event attended by close to 6,000 people, held at the Juno Beach Centre in Courseulles-sur-Mer. Commemorative anniversary celebrations were also held in Canada.

VAC held a ceremony at the National War Memorial on August 4, 2014, to commemorate the centennial of the start of the First World War. In September, ceremonies were held across Canada to mark the 75th anniversary of Canada's entry into the Second World War, providing Second World War Veterans with limited-edition commemorative lapel pins and personalized certificates of recognition.

On November 11, 2014, the National War Memorial was rededicated with the inscription *In Service to Canada / Au service du Canada* to formally recognize all Canadians who served in the past, who serve today and who will serve in the future. The dates of the Afghanistan mission and the South African War were added to the National War Memorial so that it now reflects the dates of Canada's most costly military engagements in terms of lives lost.

In November 2014, the Government of Canada marked the 70th anniversary of the Italian Campaign, with Canadian Veterans participating in overseas ceremonies at the Cassino War Cemetery, the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery and the Villanova Canadian War Cemetery to honour those Canadians who sacrificed their lives to liberate Italy.

Sub-Program 2.1.3: Partnerships and Collaborations

Description

VAC partners with a variety of government departments, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, provincial and municipal governments and corporate entities that share mutual remembrance responsibilities or goals. These mutually supportive arrangements enable VAC to further extend its reach internationally, nationally and in communities across Canada (e.g. The Friends of Vimy in France, National Defence in Canada). VAC provides funding assistance for commemorative projects through the Community Engagement Partnership Fund, the Cenotaph/Monument Restoration Program and the Community War Memorial Program. This program uses operating funds and funding from the following transfer payments: Contributions under the Commemorative Partnerships Program, Commemorative Partnerships Grants and Contributions for the Community War Memorial Program.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
4,795,621	3,768,504	(1,027,117)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
9.3	6.9	(2.4)

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Canadians have increased opportunities to participate in remembrance activities	# of opportunities Canadians have to participate in remembrance activities	225[14]	253

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Through the Commemorative Partnership Program and the Community War Memorial Program, VAC provided funding to organizations to increase opportunities for Canadians to participate in remembrance activities. Funding was provided for varied commemorative initiatives, including some marking the centennial of the First World War and the 75th anniversary of the Second World War.

The Department strengthened administration of the Commemorative Partnership Program by providing payments in the form of grants, in addition to contributions.

[14] Funding agreements for commemorative projects through the Community Engagement Partnership Fund, the Cenotaph/Monument Restoration Program and the Community War Memorial Program.

Sub-Program 2.1.4: Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance

Description

This program preserves the memory of Canadians who served their country in war and peace by maintaining in perpetuity symbols of remembrance. This includes responsibility for the 14 World War memorials in Europe, grave markers all over the world and two departmental cemeteries in Canada. War memorials and graves of the over 110,000 war dead in Europe are cared for in collaboration with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. An annual grant is also provided for the maintenance of the graves of Canadian war dead buried in Korea. Two unique memorials to those who died in service to Canada, the Canadian Virtual War Memorial and the *Books of Remembrance* are also maintained through this program. This program uses operating funds and funding from the following transfer payments: Commonwealth War Graves Commission and United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
18,046,972	18,095,094	48,122

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
40.9	30.5	(10.4)

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Memorials, gravemarkers and cemeteries for which VAC is responsible are maintained in accordance with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's standards and VAC's National Technical Maintenance Manual on behalf of all Canadians	Number of gravemarkers maintained in accordance with the standards of VAC's National Technical Maintenance Manual	7,000	3,730
	% of overseas memorial maintenance work completed in accordance with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's standards as identified in annual agreement with service provider	85%	100%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada worked with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to maintain Canada's overseas war memorials in France, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

The Department also worked with the Commission and other partners to maintain Veteran and war dead graves in Canada and overseas. As part of this work, the final phase of a three-year project, involving replacement and alignment of numerous grave markers, was completed at the Mountain View Cemetery in Lethbridge, Alberta.

Sub-Program 2.1.5: Funeral and Burial Program

Description

This program provides financial assistance toward funeral, burial and grave marking expenses of eligible Veterans to recognize their service to Canada. Under the *Veterans' Burial Regulations 2005*, assistance is available for deceased service-qualified Veterans whose deaths are a result of their service or whose estates do not have sufficient funds for a dignified funeral, burial and grave marking. The Funeral and Burial Program is administered by the Last Post Fund, an independent, non-profit organization, on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada. This program uses operating funds and funding from the following transfer payment: Last Post Fund.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Actual Spending	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
12,144,644	8,870,863	(3,273,781)

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
2.1	1.5	(0.6)

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Actual Result
Financial support is provided to eligible Veterans for funeral and burial expenses	% of time decisions are made and payments processed for means-tested funeral and burial benefits within the published service standard of 30 calendar days	80%	88%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Department exceeded its performance target of 80% for this program, with an actual result of 88%.

To ensure no Veteran is denied a dignified funeral and burial, Veterans Affairs Canada implemented changes to the Funeral and Burial Program to extend the eligibility for financial assistance to all deceased Canadian Armed Forces Veterans whose estates have insufficient funds to cover these costs.

The Department worked with the Veteran community and other stakeholders to increase awareness of these recent changes to the Funeral and Burial program.

Strategic Outcome 3: *Veterans' rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio*

Program 3.1: Veterans Ombudsman

Description

This program provides an independent and impartial opportunity to review complaints submitted by Veterans and other individuals (War Service Veterans, Veterans and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces [Regular and Reserve], members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spouses, common-law partners, survivors and primary caregivers, other eligible dependants and family members, other eligible individuals and representatives of the afore-mentioned groups).

It promotes fair and equitable treatment in accessing the services, benefits and programs from Veterans Affairs Canada. This is accomplished by: providing them with information and referrals to facilitate their access to programs and services; reviewing and addressing complaints arising from the Veterans Bill of Rights and decisions on benefits and services for which there is no right to appeal to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; reviewing systemic issues related to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; and identifying and reviewing emerging and systemic issues related to the provisions of the Department's programs and services and providing information and recommendations to the Minister in relation to those issues. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
5,790,009	5,790,009	5,312,011	4,578,484	(1,211,525)

Human Resources (FTEs)[15]

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
38.0	33.4	(4.6)

[15] This *2014–15 Departmental Performance Report* uses the same staff allocation approach used to produce the *2014–15 Report on Plans and Priorities*, to maintain consistency. The Department has adjusted how and where it allocates staff to more accurately reflect where resources are required to serve Veterans. This new approach is reflected in the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities*. As a result, some programs show a significant change in staff numbers from previous years.

Performance Results

Expected Result	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
The needs of Veterans and other individuals are addressed through Veterans Affairs programs and services	% of issues raised by Veterans and other individuals that are being addressed by the OVO	80%	79%
	% of recommendations raised by the OVO that are accepted by Veterans Affairs	80%	91%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman continued to address complaints, information requests and referrals in a timely manner:

- 5,510 client contacts represents 3,720 telephone calls (67.5%), 1,411 emails (25.6%), 146 online complaints (2.6%), and 220 letters and fax (4%) and 13 in-person visits to the Office (0.3%)
- 1,628 new case files, added to existing 121 case files, for total OVO workload of 1,749.
- Addressed 1,388 files, one percent below 80% performance standard, due to a mid-year staffing shortage.
- Answered 96% of incoming telephone calls within 20 seconds vs. two minute standard; 4% of calls were dropped.
- Initiated staffing actions to create a pool of individuals to draw on in times of increased workload and employee absences.

OVO reviewed several emerging and systemic issues, resulting in reports and recommendations:

- *Veterans' Right to Fair Adjudication: The Follow-Up Report;*
- *Supporting Severely Impaired Veterans: A Report on the New Veterans Charter Permanent Impairment Allowance and Permanent Impairment Allowance Supplement; and*
- *Veterans' Long-Term Care Needs: A Review of Assisted Living Options for Veterans.*

OVO continued to engage Veterans and their families:

- Outreach activities in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario.
- Publication of 40 blogs, eight news releases, four op-eds, five media advisories, six speeches, 72 media interviews and 686 media mentions.
- Stakeholder and public engagement via social media increased by more than 250%.
- Appearances before Parliamentary Committees (3), appearance before Senate Liberal Open Caucus (1), briefings of stakeholders, Veterans' organizations and parliamentarians and staff (97).
- Formal meeting of Veterans Ombudsman Advisory Council.

VAC Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that are administered to support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are Management and Oversight Services, Communications Services, Legal Services, Human Resources Management Services, Financial Management Services, Information Management Services, Information Technology Services, Real Property Services, Materiel Services, Acquisition Services, and Travel and Other Administrative Services. Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not those provided to a specific program.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2014–15 Main Estimates	2014–15 Planned Spending	2014–15 Total Authorities Available for Use	2014–15 Actual Spending (authorities used)	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
66,079,710	66,079,710	78,092,980	78,092,980	12,013,270[16]

Human Resources (FTEs)

2014–15 Planned	2014–15 Actual	2014–15 Difference (actual minus planned)
611.0	635.6	24.6

Improving Internal Services

The Department implemented various initiatives during the year to provide more streamlined processes and effective tools for employees to deliver internal services:

- Developed and adopted Common Human Resources and Financial Management Business Processes.
- Implemented a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure allowing the setup of a standard computer desktop, regardless of where the employee is located.
- Centralized financial services (e.g., accounts receivable and payable) to streamline operations.
- Launched a new system allowing requestors to submit and pay online for Access to Information and Privacy requests.
- Enhanced the governance structure for procurement (e.g., updated contract review board).
- Began to implement GCDOCS, a new electronic document and records management system, to allow for more efficient and effective management and access to electronic documents.

[16] The difference between planned and actual spending is primarily related to budget re-allocations after the start of the fiscal year, funds for paylist requirements (such as parental benefits), a one-time transition payment for salary in arrears, and a greater number of FTE's than originally planned.

- Updated the HR Toolbox to provide employees quick access to information, guidelines and forms relating to Human Resources services.
- Continued to improve staff privacy awareness, providing training to 898 people on the requirements of privacy protection and decreasing privacy breaches by more than 40% over the previous year.
- Fostered improvements to the workplace through webinar workshops on managing stress and extended the Memorandum of Understanding for the Charlottetown Joint Learning Program.
- Awarded a national contract to improve accessibility to second language learning and facilitated individual and group language training activities across the country.
- Implemented the Performance Management Program for Employees in accordance with the Directive on Performance Management.
    - In its first year of implementation, VAC put in place its review panel, completed various learning and information sessions and engaged managers and employees alike in the process.
    - All told, 98% of employees registered in the Public Service Performance Management Application; 93% had mid-year conversations with their managers; and, 86% completed their annual review.
- Implemented a number of initiatives working towards continued modernization through Blueprint 2020, including:
    - a "Work Place of Choice" Action Plan; and
    - a workplace mental health support program.

Leveraged and modernized technology to improve services for Veterans and their families, including easier remote access to VAC information systems and enhanced system functionality.

Section III: Supplementary Information

Financial Statements Highlights

Veterans Affairs Canada
Condensed Statement of Operations (unaudited)
For the Year Ended March 31, 2015
(dollars)

Financial Information	2014–15 Planned Results	2014–15 Actual	2013–14 Actual	Difference (2014–15 actual minus 2014–15 planned)	Difference (2014–15 actual minus 2013–14 actual)
Total expenses	3,616,253,785	3,548,872,375	3,537,499,200	(67,381,410)	11,373,175
Total revenues	-	18,846	13,168	18,846	5,678
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	3,616,253,785	3,548,853,529	3,537,486,032	(67,400,256)	11,367,497

The expenses of the Department for 2014–15 were relatively consistent in comparison to those in 2013–14. Overall, spending from continuing operations increased by $11 million (6%) in comparison to that of 2013–14. This increase is primarily the result of the establishment of allowances relating to the expected transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Province of Quebec. Departmental spending in 2014–15 was lower than previous years as a result of a decrease in expenditures on VAC's more traditional programs such as Disability Pensions ($90 million decrease compared to 2013–14). This decrease was partially offset by the increased spending on New Veterans Charter programs such as Disability Awards, Earnings Loss and Supplementary Retirement Benefits. Current demographic projections anticipate that over the next four years the number of individuals accessing VAC's traditional programs will continue to decline, most significantly for War Service Veterans. As new programs are introduced, the number of CAF Veterans accessing programs will continue to increase while the demand for the existing New Veterans Charter programs will continue.

Financial Statements Highlights.../cont'd

Veterans Affairs Canada Condensed Statement of Financial Position (unaudited) As at March 31, 2015 (dollars)			
Financial Information	2014–15	2013–14	Difference (2014–15 minus 2013–14)
Total net liabilities	160,019,228	85,327,664	74,691,564
Total net financial assets	79,859,035	78,467,747	1,391,288
Departmental net debt	80,160,193	6,859,917	73,300,276
Total non-financial assets	12,068,933	96,454,710	(84,385,777)
Departmental net financial position	(68,091,260)	89,594,793	(157,686,053)

Net liabilities increased by approximately $74 million in 2015 and non-financial assets decreased by approximately $84 million in 2015. This is the result of liabilities established and the write-down of capital assets in relation to the Government of Canada's agreement to transfer Ste. Anne's Hospital to Province of Quebec.

Financial Statements

VAC's Financial Statements can be found on the Veterans Affairs Canada website[viii].

Supplementary Information Tables

The supplementary information tables listed in the *2014–15 Departmental Performance Report* can be found on VAC's website[ix]:

- Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy;
- Details on Transfer Payment Programs;
- Internal Audits and Evaluations;
- Response to Parliamentary Committees and External Audits; and
- Status Report on Projects Operating With Specific Treasury Board Approval

Tax Expenditures and Evaluations

The tax syst can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures annually in the Tax Expenditures and Evaluations publication. The tax measures presented in the Tax Expenditures and Evaluations publication are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Section IV: Organizational Contact Information

Veterans Affairs Canada
161 Grafton Street
P.O. Box 7700
Charlottetown PE C1A 8M9

Toll free: **1-866-522-2122**
www.veterans.gc.ca

Veterans Ombudsman
134 Kent Street
P.O. Box 66
Charlottetown PE C1A 7K2

Toll free: **1-877-330-4343**
www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca

Appendix: Definitions

appropriation: Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures: Includes operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Departmental Performance Report: Reports on an appropriated organization's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Report on Plans and Priorities. These reports are tabled in Parliament in the fall.

full-time equivalent: Is a measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

Government of Canada outcomes: A set of 16 high-level objectives defined for the government as a whole, grouped in four spending areas: economic affairs, social affairs, international affairs and government affairs.

Management, Resources and Results Structure: A comprehensive framework that consists of an organization's inventory of programs, resources, results, performance indicators and governance information. Programs and results are depicted in their hierarchical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Management, Resources and Results Structure is developed from the Program Alignment Architecture.

non-budgetary expenditures: Includes net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance: What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator: A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting: The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

planned spending: For Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs) and Departmental Performance Reports (DPRs), planned spending refers to those amounts that receive Treasury Board approval by February 1. Therefore, planned spending may include amounts incremental to planned expenditures presented in the Main Estimates. A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their RPPs and DPRs.

plan: The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

priorities: Plans or projects that an organization has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired Strategic Outcome(s).

program: A group of related resource inputs and activities that are managed to meet specific needs and to achieve intended results and that are treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Alignment Architecture: A structured inventory of an organization's programs depicting the hierarchical relationship between programs and the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute.

Report on Plans and Priorities: Provides information on the plans and expected performance of appropriated organizations over a three-year period. These reports are tabled in Parliament each spring.

result: An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures: Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

Strategic Outcome: A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

sunset program: A time-limited program that does not have an ongoing funding and policy authority. When the program is set to expire, a decision must be made whether to continue the program. In the case of a renewal, the decision specifies the scope, funding level and duration.

target: A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures: Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The Vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

whole-of-government framework: Maps the financial contributions of federal organizations receiving appropriations by aligning their Programs to a set of 16 government-wide, high-level outcome areas, grouped under four spending areas.

Endnotes

i. *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*, http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/V-1/index.html
ii. *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act*, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-16.8/
iii. *Pension Act*, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/p-6/index.html
iv. Veterans Bill of Rights, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/rights
v. Whole-of-government framework, http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ppg-cpr/frame-cadre-eng.aspx
vi. Public Accounts of Canada 2015, http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html
vii. Public Works and Government Services Canada website, http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html
viii. Financial Statements, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/reports/departmental-financial-statements
ix. Supplementary Information Tables on Veterans Affairs Canada's website, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/reports/performance/2014-2015